

REMARKS

Claims 2 through 9, 11 through 21, 24 and 25 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 10 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein in this Response and claims 22 and 23 were similarly previously canceled. Claims 8, 16, 18 and 21 are the independent claims. Claims 2, 4, 8, 11, 13, 15 through 18 and 21 have been amended. New claims 24 and 25 have been added to depend from independent claim 21.

Claims 1 through 7, 10 through 15, and 18 through 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,872,769 to Caldara et al. in view of Fichou et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,790,522.

Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for the allowable subject matter indicated in claims 8, 9, 16 and 17, if rewritten in independent form to include the recitations in the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants respectfully request that the above-identified application be reconsidered in view of the above amendments and following remarks.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that claims 8, 9, 16 and 17 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the recitations in the base claim and any intervening claims. In order to advance prosecution, claims 8 and 16 have been rewritten in independent form to include all of the recitations of claims 1 and 10, respectively, to place claims 8 and 16, and the claims that depend therefrom, in condition for allowance. Claim 17 has been amended to depend from claim 16 to put it in condition for allowance. Independent claims 18 and 21 have been amended to include recitations similar to those in claims 8 and 16 that the Examiner indicated would be allowable to overcome the rejection of claims 18 and 21, and the claims that depend therefrom. However, the above-described amendments are in no way to be interpreted as acquiescence to the Section 103 rejection and Applicants reserve the right to pursue the previously rejected claims in a continuation application. Therefore, Applicants believe that claims 2 through

9, 11 through 21, 24 and 25 are allowable and respectfully request a notice of allowance to that effect be issued.

The 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejection

Claims 1 through 7, 10 through 15 and 18 through 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Caldara et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,872,769 in view of Fichou et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,790,522. This rejection is believed to be rendered moot based on the above-described amendments rewriting the claims to recite the allowable subject matter indicated by the Examiner. Therefore, the Section 103 rejection of claims 1 through 7, 10 through 15 and 18 through 21 is believed to be moot. Accordingly, Applicants believe all pending claims to be allowable and respectfully request issuance of a notice of allowance for claims 2 through 9, 11 through 21, 24 and 25.

CONCLUSION

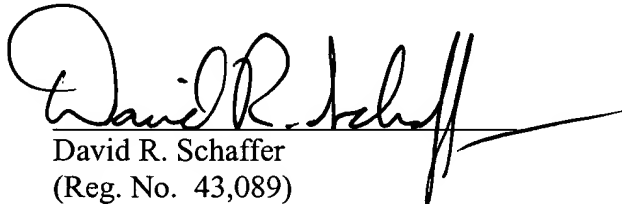
In view of the above amendments and remarks, the Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added and the present case is in condition for allowance or at least in better form for appeal and respectfully request that the Examiner issue a notice of allowance to that effect.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees determined to be necessary under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17 or credit any overpayment to Kenyon & Kenyon **Deposit Account No. 11-0600.**

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 220-4263 to discuss any matter concerning this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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David R. Schaffer
(Reg. No. 43,089)

KENYON & KENYON
1500 K Street, N.W.
Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
Tel: (202) 220 - 4200
Fax: (202) 220 - 4201